

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

5 1. A document display apparatus that manages a plurality of electronic documents that each hold, when a linked document having display relevancy exists, the relative relevancy to that linked document as structure information, determines the display priority of each electronic document, and displays each electronic document based on its display priority, provided with:

10 a structure storage means for storing the display priority of each said electronic document;

15 a structure analysis means for determining the display priority of each of said plurality of electronic documents based on the structure information held by each of said plurality of electronic documents, and stores them in said structure storage means; and

a display means for determining the display method of each electronic document based on the display priority determined by said structure analysis means.

20 2. The document display apparatus according to Claim 1, further having:

an instruction reception means for receiving a display-related instruction input, wherein

25 based on the instruction input received by said instruction reception means, the display priority of each of said plurality of electronic documents is recalculated

by said structure analysis means and is stored in said structure storage means.

3. The document display apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein said display means displays only ones of said plurality of electronic documents whose display priority is a value larger than a predetermined display set value.

4. The document display apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein

said display means allocates computer resources for displaying determined ones of said plurality of electronic documents in order of largest display priority value, and each of said electronic document having a corresponding display priority value that is smaller than a predetermined value are not displayed.

5. The document display apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein said display means allocates computer resources to ones of said electronic documents having a display priority value that is larger than said display set value, in order of largest display priority value, and each electronic document whose display priority value is smaller than a predetermined value are not displayed.

6. The document display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said structure analysis means scans each linked document based on the structure information held by

an origin electronic document, analyzes the document group structure and stores information corresponding to the document group structure in said structure storage means.

7. The document display apparatus according to Claim 6, wherein said structure analysis means does not scan linked documents of electronic documents having a display priority having a value that is smaller than a predetermined first set value.

8. The document display apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein

said structure analysis means excludes electronic documents whose display priority has a value smaller than a predetermined second set value from the management target of the document group structure stored in said structure storage means, and releases computer resources needed for the management of those documents.

9. A document display method for managing a plurality of electronic documents that each include structure information relating to a linked document having display relevancy, the document display method for determining the display priority of each electronic document, and for displaying each electronic document on a display apparatus based on its display priority, provided with:

determining a starting point document to be used as a

starting point when analyzing the structure information of the plurality of electronic documents;

analyzing the structure information of the starting point document and calculate the display priority of each the linked document group whose link source is included in the starting point document;

specifying a display document to be displayed on the display apparatus based on the display priority of the linked document group;

specifying the document group constituent documents that constitute the document group structure, add and store that structure information in the document group structure based on the display priority of the linked document group whose link source is the starting point document; and

searching for the electronic document that constitutes a next starting point document based on the document group structure, wherein

the above steps are repeated, and scanning for displaying is terminated at the point in time when there are no longer any electronic documents that constitute the starting point document determined by the determining of a start point step.

10. The document display method according to Claim 9, wherein

in said step of determining a start point, the origin document with highest priority is specified as the first starting point document based on instruction input.

5 11. The document display method according to Claim 10, wherein in said step of specifying a display document the display priority value of each electronic document of a linked document group linked to said starting point document is compared to a predetermined display set value such that all of these electronic documents having a display priority value greater than or equal to the predetermined display set value are set to be displayed on the display apparatus, and those electronic documents having a display priority value less than the predetermined display set value are not displayed on the display apparatus.

10 12. The document display method according to Claim 11, wherein said step of specifying a display document, computer resources are allocated for displaying determined electronic documents of the linked document group whose link source is the starting point document, and whose display priority value is greater than or equal to said display set value, and each electronic document whose display priority value is smaller than that of the display priority value is not displayed on the display apparatus.

15 20 25 13. The document display method according to Claim

12, wherein in said step of specifying the document group constituent documents the structure information of electronic documents of the linked document group whose link source is the starting point document having a display priority value is smaller than the predetermined first set value are not analyzed.

14. The document display method according to Claim 12, wherein in said step of specifying the document group constituent documents, computer resources needed for managing electronic documents of the linked document group whose link source is the starting point document having a display priority value that is smaller than a predetermined second set value are released.

15. A document display method for displaying a first electronic document and a second electronic document, the first electronic document having a information related to the second electronic document, the method comprising the steps of:

displaying the first electronic document on a computer display;

overlaying an image on the first electronic document corresponding to the second electronic document at a predetermined positioned defined in the first electronic document;

resizing the first electronic document and the image

corresponding to the second electronic document such that the first electronic document and the image of the second electronic document change size proportionally with respect to one another, said resizing step being in response to user input or computer commands; and

further displaying the resized first electronic document and overlaying the resized image corresponding to the second document on the computer display maintaining relative positions between the first and second electronic documents in accordance with the predetermined position.

16. The document display method as set forth in claim 15 wherein:

in said overlaying step, further overlaying an image corresponding to a third electronic document on the first electronic document at a predetermined position defined in the first electronic document;

in said resizing step, further resizing the image corresponding to the third electronic document proportionally with the resizing of the first and second electronic documents; and

in said further displaying step, overlaying the resized image corresponding to the third electronic document on the first electronic document maintaining relative positions between the first and third electronic documents in accordance with the predetermined position of

the third electronic document relative to the first electronic document.

17. A document display apparatus for displaying a first electronic document and a second electronic document, the first electronic document having a information related to the second electronic document, the apparatus comprising:

means for determining display priority of the first and second electronic document;

means for displaying the first electronic document on a computer display;

means for overlaying an image on the first electronic document corresponding to the second electronic document at a predetermined positioned defined in the first electronic document;

means for resizing the first electronic document and the image corresponding to the second electronic document in response to computer and/or user commands such that the size of the first electronic document and the size of the image of the second electronic document change proportionally with respect to one another; and

means for further displaying the resized first electronic document and overlaying the resized image corresponding to the second document on the computer display maintaining relative positions between the first

and second electronic documents in accordance with the
predetermined position.

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